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UDAH'S PURGING IN THE MELTING POT.

A SERMON

Preached in the Cathedrall at *SARUM* before the Reverend Sir *Robert Foster*, and Sir *Thomas Tirrell* Knights, Judges for the Western Circuit, at the *Wiltshire* Assizes, *Sept.* 6. 1660.

By W. CREEDE *D. D. Archdeacon of Wilts and Canon Resident of Sarum.*

Published at the speciall request of their Lordships, and divers eminent Gentlemen, Justices of the Peace, and others.

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A

To the Reverend

Sir *ROBERT FOSTER*,

AND

Sir *THOMAS TIRRELL*

Knights,

His MAJESTIES Juſtices of the Court of Common Pleas at Weſtminſter, Judges for the Weſtern Circuit.

AND

To the Honourable and Right Worſhipfull, the Juſtices of the Peace for the County of WILTS.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

THat *I preſume to affix your Names to this Sermon, is to let the World know, that as by your* Favour *in not* forſaking *our* Cathedrall, *I had the Opportunity to Preach it, ſo by your* deſire, *and at the* Inſtance *of divers Honourable and Worſhipfull Perſons, Juſtices of the Peace, and others it was committed to the Preſs.*

The truth is, my Lords, you and thoſe worthy Gentlemen did more then deſire *it. You aſſured me (as a Mo-*

tive for you to ask, and me to grant) *that it would be very* useful *for the* Publick. *And this had with me the Nature of a* Command; *because I count it my duty, as a Minister of Christ, to promote by all lawfull wayes, the* true interest of Christianity, *exemplary Piety, Repentance, Purity and Peace.*

And as these blessed Ends (*wherein the Happiness, and Wellfare of a Church and Nation consist*) *have been by Gods Grace* (*though with much Frailty and Weakness*) *the constant Objects of my Endeavours in the work of the Ministery, so now more especially, since God has been pleased so* miraculously *to be seen in our Deliverance, and happy Restauration. For though Gods* Judgements *allwayes signally call for Repentance, yet me thinks his* Mercies *much more; because he has promised that Christs* People shall be willing in the day of *his* power, in the Beauty of holiness from the womb of the Morning, *when the lively fruitfull* Dews *of Grace fall, that renew the face of the Earth, and make it fresh and* youthful.

Psalm. 110.

And as these times are Times *of* Mercy, *so I thought, that* healing Discourses *were the fittest. But then that the Cure might be* sound *and* reall, *not* Palliative *and* false, *I thought it proper at this* Season (*the* Embleme *of the great* Assize) *to search the wound unto the bottome. And therefore I made choice of a Scripture, not so much to teach you your Duties, (which I had good Reason to hope you better understood, than to need my Admonition) as to make my Auditory sensible of those sins, that had drawn down our heavy* Judgements, *that so laying them to heart, they might leave the Magistrate less work by a Cordial Repentance, and more prise Gods* Mercies, *so* miraculously *bestowed on us, when we had least Reason to expect them,*

because

because by his Corrections, *we had so little been prepared for them.*

Yet because I saw God had drawn a wonderfull Veil *of* Mercy *between our Sins, and his Judgements, and that the* King *and his* great Council, *were so sollicitous and carefull in Preparing and Passing so unparallell'd an* Act *of* Grace *and perpetuall* Oblivion, *I resolved not to meddle with any* Persons, *or* Parties, *concerned in that* Act, *but with the* crimes *of the* Text, *and the* Vices *of the* Nation, *and stil to fix on such Motives, as the Text naturally suggested, to make us* bury *our* Animosities, *and with all* Humility *to* adore *the* Hand *in the* Clouds, *and not* regard *the* rods, *and the* Scourges, *wherewith we were beaten. And where in the* Application *I was forced to speak of the* sins, *that had made us like* Jerusalem, *in the* Punishment, *I industriously confined my self to those, that had been in the* Melting Pot. *And I have reason to bless God, that the great* Sufferers, *and prime Objects of my Discourse, were so* sensible *of my* reproofs, *that they gave me hearty thanks.*

As for the rest *of the* Audience, *they were so* unconcerned *in my* Thoughts, *that I could not be so* uncharitable *to imagine, they would so much* own *and* countenance *the* sins *of the* Text, *as to conceive themselves* aimed *at in the* Description *of those sins. And it must be their own unchristian* Imprudence, *if by any* siniſter Construction, *they turned that into a* Satyre, *which I delivered a* Sermon. *And I wish them timely to consider, whether such* unjust Apprehensions *may not* deprive *them of a* right *to our Mercies, by* entitling *themselves* as yet *to those* sins, *that have drawn down such* Judgements.

Yet if any Sanballats *and* Tobiahs *still maligning the happy* restauration *and* Building *our* Jerusalem *and* Temple,

Temple, *will think* themſelves *concerned, when the* ſins *ſo ſorely threatned, and ſharply puniſhed in Gods People, are but* named *and* deſcribed, *this wil onely argue their* guilt, *that ſtill ſtares them in the Face, and will not ſuffer them to* forget, *what their Brethren have reſolved to bury in* perpetual oblivion; *and they are too much like the Roman Dame, whoſe* trembling *at the* noyſe *of the* Lictors whip (*that was the* Enſign *of her Siſters* Honour) *did palpably betray the meanneſs of her preſent condition. But as I thought not of any ſuch* Self-libellers, *as theſe, before the* Sermon *was* Preached, *ſo I ſhall leſs think of them now, when it comes from the* Preſs.

I have better work at preſent, to praiſe *God for his* Mercies *in the* removal *of his* judgements, *and humbly beſeech him, that by the* power *of his* Grace, *he would put an* end *to our* ſins, *leſt they make us unworthy of the* continuance *of his* mercies. *And as he has* reſtored *us* our Judges as at the firſt, and our Counſellors as at the beginning, *ſo he would make you, my Lords, and Gentlemen, very eminent among thoſe, whom he has deſigned to* dreſs *and* poliſh *us by* Juſtice *and* Judgement, *that ſo* being *now* delivered from the hands of our enemies, we may *all* ſerve *God* without fear, in holineſs, and righteouſneſs before him all the dayes of our life, *and become* a faithfull City, a City of Righteouſneſs. *And this ſhall be the Prayer of*,

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

Your moſt faithfull ſervant in Chriſt Jeſus

WILLIAM CREEDE.

JUDAH'S PURGING IN THE MELTING POT.

Iſaiah I. verſ. 25, 26.

And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy droſs, and take away all thy Tinne.

And I will reſtore thy Judges, as at the firſt, and thy Counſellors, as at the beginning: afterward thou ſhalt be called the City of Righteouſneſs, the faithfull City.

The Context runs thus.

Verſ. 21. *How is the faithfull City become an Harlot? it was full of judgement, righteouſneſs lodged in it, but now murderers.*

22. *Thy ſilver is become droſs, thy wine mixt with water.*

23. *Thy Princes are rebellious, and companions of thieves: every one loveth gifts, and followeth after*

ter rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.

24. *Therefore thus saith the Lord, the Lord of hosts, the mighty one of Israel, Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.*

25. *And I will turn my hand upon thee, &c.*

27. *Zion shalbe redeemed with judgement, and her converts with righteousness.*

THE words indeed are a Prophecy concerning *Judah* and *Jerusalem* [a] ver 1, but fitted and calculated for every *Meridian* and Countrey, where God has a Church. [b] *These things*, saith the Apostle, *happened to them for ensamples*, and *were* [c] *written for our instruction.*

And though this be Gods constant Method, yet no Nation under Heaven has had a more signall experiment of the Accomplishment of this Prophecy in the first, and most eminent parts of it, then our selves. We have sensibly been taught by our late afflictions and miseries, and the now happy Restauration of our *former Judges* and *Counsellors*, that it belongs to us, as well as to *Judah* and *Jerusalem*. And God grant, that as our late miseries and judgements have not been to *devoure*, but onely to *refine* us, so we may have a share in the *Issue* and *Event* of the Prophecy, and that our *Magistrates* and *Ministers*, that God has restored to us, may have a powerfull influence on our true Reformation; that our *Zion may be redeemed with Judgement, and her Converts with Righteousness.*

You see the Text exactly squares with the Times, and

[a] Esay 1.1.

[b] 1 Cor. 10. 11.

[c] Rom. 15. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 10. 11.

Esay 1. 27.

and this Occasion. For here the Prophet represents to you Gods dealings in the Reformation of his people under the Metaphor of a *Founder*, as it were *melting* and *dressing* them to be fit *vessels of his Sanctuary*. *And I will turn mine hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, &c.*

Wherein observe a double *work* or *Operation* of this All-wise, Almighty *Artist*, with the *Issue* and *Event* of it.

In the first *work*, we have God like the *Goldsmith* laying his *hand* upon the *Metall*, which he finds corrupted and embased beyond all possibility of *scouring*, and then *breaking* it in pieces by his *judgements*, and casting it into the *Fornace* of *Affliction* to purifie it from its *dross*, and refine it from the *Tin*. *And I will turn mine hand upon thee, &c.*

In the second, we have Gods dealing with the Metall now *purified* and *melted*. He brings it to the *wheel*, and the *Anvile*, the *Hammer* and the *File*, the *Putty* and the *Oile* to *shape* and *fashion*, *dress* and *polish* it for the *great Masters use*. He restores unto them good *Magistrates*, and good *Ministers* * men of lawfull Authority for *Commission*, and of solid Integrity for *Execution*; such *Judges as they had at first, and such Counsellors as at the beginning*: the one to shape and dress them by *Judgement* and *Justice* in

* *Calvin, Junius*, and others after them, by Counsellors, here also understood Civil Magistrates, that were assistents to the Judges; but *Jerom, Haymo, Lyra, Alapide, Brentius*, the ordinary *Glosse*, and others understand it of the Restauration of the Priests and the Prophets; such as *Ezra, Josiah* the son of *Josedech*, and the Apostles and Ministers of the Gospel. But it seems, to me at least, to have been literally and primarily fulfilled under *Hezekiah*, who restored the Priests and the Levites to the service of the Lord; though secundarily, and in type, it refers to all such future Restauration in the Church. Compare 2 Chron. cap. 29, 30, 31. and 2 Kings 18. and the stories of *Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz*, with the first Chap. of *Isaiah*.

[a] Psal. 101.8. punishing offenders, and [a] *cutting off all evil doers from the city of the Lord*; the other to scoure and po-
[b] 2 Tim. 3.15, 16,17. lish them by *sound doctrine* [b], and *seasonable reproof, by wholesome correction and instruction in Righteousness. And I will restore unto thee thy Judges, &c.*

And then the *Issue* and *Event* is (which is the third Branch of the Text) the vessels of Gold and Silver thus *purified* and *fashioned* become *sanctified indeed and vessels unto honour. Afterward thou shalt be called the Citie of Righteousness, the faithfull Citie*, or according to the Hebrew Idiome, thou shalt really *be*, as thou art *called*, or, as *Calvin*, thou shalt be so eminently a just and religious people, that all Nations round about shall take notice, and speak of it, and call thee, as thou art.

Of these in the Order proposed. And first of the first, *Gods purifying of his People from their drosse, and their Tin by the fire of Affliction.*

And I will turn my hand upon thee, &c.

וְאָשִׁיבָה יָדִי
Καὶ ἐπάξω LXXII.

It beginns with a *Copulative*. And this shews the Connexion and dependence of this Act and Operation on the former, at the same instant, that God will *avenge himself upon his Adversaries*, he will *turn his hand* on *Zion*. Whence observe, That when the sins of a Nation are at the height, God brings a nationall Judgement.

Lam. 4. 11. *He kindles a fire in Zion, and it devours the very foundations thereof.* In common Calamities all suffer alike. The Plague, the Sword, the Famine (Gods National whips and scourges) make no distinction. The Good and Bad are equally exposed

unto

unto their fury. The fire in the Fornace as well furiously ſcorches the *precious metall*, as the *Tin*, and *droſs*. The onely difference is in the *iſſue* of the *work*, and the *deſign* of the *Artificer*: and God with the ſelfſame Judgements, wherewith he *eaſes* himſelf of his *Adverſaries*, *refines* and *melts* his *people*, that are in covenant with him.

Whence learn we not to paſs cenſure on private perſons in common Calamities. Let us not think them *worſe, on whom the Tower in Siloe fell*, then the reſt of *Jeruſalem* that eſcaped: or that thoſe were the very worſt and moſt *ſeditious* of all the *Galileans*, whoſe *blood Pilate mingled with their ſacrifices*, and ſo periſhed in their Rebellion. But conſider we what our Saviour has told us *Luk.* 13. 3. 5. againſt ſuch Cenſurers, *I tell you nay, but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* He that ſinks in a common Calamity, may be better then any that are ſpared: nay ſometimes the *beſt* and *chiefeſt* in a Nation fall ſooneſt under the Burden. Luke 13. 4. Luke 13. 2,

But then many times this happens not for their own, but others ſins, even of thoſe that are often ſpared in the Judgement. When the *People murmured againſt God, he was angry*, ſaies the *Pſalmiſt*, with *Moſes*, (their Ruler) *for their ſakes.* A *pious King* may be deſtroyed by, and for the ſins of thoſe, that conſpire his deſtruction. Or ſecondly, God ſometimes takes away the *Good man* from the *evil yet to come*, when he has *greater plagues* in ſtore. Or thirdly, that the wicked may have no *Mediators*, no *Interceſſors* left, to bind his hands, and *wreſtle* with him in *Prayer*, as [a] *Moſes* did, when he reſolves to deſtroy them. We do not [b] find *ten righteous perſons* Pſal. 106. 32

[a] Exod. 32. 10, 11. Pſal. 106. 23.
[b] Gen. 18. 32.

in the foure Cities of the Plain, though *Lot* and his Family dwelt in *Sodom*, left it might have *been spared for tens sake.*

And no injustice at all in this. For as the best men have their sins, and he that is least guilty in a Nation has some way or other helped to add to the *publick Banck*: so the worst may, through Gods mercy to them in Christ, be reprieved in National Judgements, to give them space to repent (it was wicked *Jezabels* case Revel. 2. 21.) or he may reserve them for *whips* and *scourges* to punish an hypocriticall people, as he saved the [c] Traytor *Jeroboam* from the sword of his Prince, that so he might be the [d] scourge to *Rehoboam* the son of a [e] *wicked Father*. And if they make not good use of this Reprieve, God has greater Judgements in store (as he had for impenitent *Jezabel*, Revel. 2. 22, 23.) and when the discipline is ended, then the *Assyrian the* [f] *Rod of his Anger*, must be thrown into the fire, and [f] *another nation* shall visit and ruine them, for the evil of Gods People, to which they were instrumentall.

[c] 1 King. 11. 26. 40.
2 Chron. 13. 6
[d] 1 Kings 11. 31, 32, 33. compared with vers. 9, 10. 11.
[e] 1 King. 11. 1, 2 &c. to the 11. Quisquis ille Confessor est, Salomone major aut melior, aut charior non est, qui tamen quamdiu in viis Domini ambulavit, tamdiu gratiam, quam de Domino fuerat consecutus, obtinuit. Postquam dereliquit Domini viam perdidit & gratiam Domini. Et ideo scriptum est, Tene quod habes ne alius accipiat Coronam. Cyprian de Eccles. Unitate seu simplicitate Prælat. p 171. edit. Froben. Basil. *But if the wicked will turn from all his sins, that he hath committed, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right. he shall surely live, he shall not dye,* Ezek. 18 21. And that *Solomon* repented of his evil wayes., I have reason to imagine, and that *Ecclesiastes* was the signal fruit of his Repentance.
[f] Esay 10. 5. 12.

Let not then *the* [g] *Axe boast it self against the wood*, that is *hewed*, and say, *I am better then thou*, much less *against him that heweth therewith*: nor let him,

[g] Esay 10. 15.

that

that has escaped a common Calamity, think it was for his own goodness, that he fell not, as other men. Gods Judgements as we read in [h] *Daniel* and the *Revelation*, are still *sealed*. They are *secret hidden* things to us, and we know not the *Causes* nor the *Justice* of them. *Nevertheless*, as the Apostle * 2 Tim. 2. 19. *the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them, that are his. And let every one that but nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* That is † our business at all times; especially in publick Calamities. † *But secret things* (his winding intricate Paths of Providence and Judgement against an hypocritical People) *belong unto the Lord.* We may see indeed *who suffers*, and *what scourge* falls upon him, but then we know not the *end*, or *reason* of the stroak.

[h] Dan. 12. 4. 9 Revel. 6. 3. & 10. 4. Isai. 29. 11. * 2 Tim. 2. 19 † Deut. 29. 29.

It is not then for us to *pry* into Gods *Counsels* when he is at his work of Judgement When the *Founder sits* at the *Melting pot*, none can know, but himself, why this piece of Metall first goes into the flame, or why that other is reserved. Gods *Judgements*, sayes the * Psalmist, *are a great deep*, not to be fathomed by us.

* Psal. 36. 6.

No rather, let it humble us under his sin-avenging hand, and make us tremble at the severity of his wrath, and abhor our own vileness, that makes him spare none. Good, bad, all alike, we see, lye under a common Calamity: and the best are either first taken away, or are the most eminent in sufferings. Let it teach us to adore his Justice in *Wonder* and *Silence*, and make us lay our hands on our lips, as † *David* did, and be *dumb, and open not our mouth, because God did it.* Or rather let us lay our hands on our

† Psal. 39. 9.

our hearts, and judge not others, but our ſelves;
2 Sam. 12. 7. and ſay as *Nathan* did to *David*, *we, we are the men*; We have brought this deſtruction on our Princes, and on our Brethren. Let it make us *lift up our*
Eſay 37. 5. *Prayers for the remnant that is left.* As the Judge-
Joel 2. 16. 17. ment has been National and Publick, ſo let *all the Congregation, the Elders, the Sucklings, the Bridegroom, the Prieſts, all cry out, ſpare thy People, O Lord, and give not thine heritage to reproach.* Let our Prayers and our Repentance be as large and publick as our Sins and Miſeries have been. Alas! let us not conſider who was ſtruck, or who ſpared, or who threatned in the deſolation, but the *hand*, that did ſtrike us. The *Author* of the Puniſhment, the next thing conſiderable.

And that is one ſufficient enough for ſuch a work. For he wants nor *Power*, nor *Skill*, nor *Authority* to
Eſay 1. 24. effect it, becauſe he is *the Lord, the Lord of Hoſts, the mighty one of Iſrael*, as he deſcribes himſelf in the verſe before the Text, to ſhew his own ſtrength, and our weakneſs, and affright the ſinner to Repentance.

Job 25. 3. For his *Power*, he is *the Lord of hoſts, the mighty one:* and *is there any number of his Armies?* as it is *Job* 25. 3. And certainly methinks this alone ſhould humble us, were we rationall Creatures. For *do we pro-*
1 Cor. 10. 22. *voke the Lord, the Lord of hoſts, to Jealouſie? Are we*
Eſay 33. 14. *ſtronger then he*, that is, *the mighty one of Iſrael?* Are any of us *able to dwell with his Everlaſting burnings?* Are we ſufficient to meet him with our ten thouſand *Weakneſſes*, that comes againſt us with his twenty thouſand *Judgements*? Me thinks when a Nationall

nall Plague is broke in upon us, it ſhould humble and terribly amate us, that it is *the King of Kings*, and *Lord of hoſts*, one higher, one ſtronger then all, that ſmites us, that can conſume us *with the very breath of his noſtrils*; us, that are as ſtubble before the flames, and chaff before the wind, that *like Ægypts horſes, are fleſh and not Spirit*? Pſal. 18.8. Eſay 5.24. Eſay 31.3.

Though in our *Brave*, with † *Sennacherib*, we talk high, and threaten what we will do againſt the enemy at home, or abroad, yet * *Leviathan* has a *hook in his Noſtrils*, the *war horſe hath a bridle in his lipps*: he ſhall go, but to the compaſs of his Line, and whether † God himſelf by his allwiſe Providence ſhall guide him to deſtroy. * *Therefore thus ſaith the Lord concerning the King of Aſſyria, He ſhall not come into this City, nor ſhoot an Arrow there, nor come before it with ſhields, nor caſt a Banck againſt it. By the way that he came, by the ſame ſhall he return, and ſhall not come into this City ſaith the Lord. For I will defend this City to ſave it for my own ſake, and for my ſervant Davids ſake.* So again, *Eſay* 54.16. *Behold, ſayes God, I have created the Smith that bloweth the coles in the fire, and that bringeth forth his Inſtruments for his work, and I have created the waſter to deſtroy.* But can he go further then God pleaſes? No. It follows v. 17. *No weapon that is formed againſt thee, ſhall proſper: and every tongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in Judgement, thou ſhalt condemn: this is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord.* † Eſay 37.24. 25. * Verſ. 29. † A notable example of Gods Providence in this kind we have *Ezechiel* 21. 19, 20, 21, 22, &c. Vid. Grot. in loc. * Eſay 37.33, 34, 35. Eſay 54.16. Verſ. 17.

And therefore, † *Wo unto him that ſtriveth with his Maker: Let the Potſheards ſtrive with (their equals) the Potſheards of the Earth: Shall the Clay ſay to him that faſhioneth it, what makeſt thou, or thy work, he hath* † Eſay 49.9.

no hands? No, consider we what he sayes a little before to this purpose of *Cyrus*, * *whose right hand he had holden to subdue Nations before him, Esay* 54. 5. *I am the Lord and there is none else, there is no God besides me: I have girded thee with strength, though thou hast not known me.*

* Esay 49. . Vers. 5.

This for the consideration of Gods *Power* to humble us, in a common Calamity. None so strong as he; none so weak as we are.

But then not onely *strength* and *might* are his; but *wisdome*, and *counsell* too, to effect, whatsoever he pleases. He stiles himself *the Lord*, for that. *Ah Lord God*, sayes *Jeremy* c. 32. 17, 18, 19. *behold thou hast made the Heaven and the earth — and there is nothing too hard for thee — Great in Counsell and mighty in work; for thine eyes are open upon all the wayes of the sonnes of men, to give every one according to his wayes, and the fruit of his doings.*

Jer. 32. 17, 18, 19.

We when a Judgement comes, may strive and plot and labour what we can to prevent it. What *Rabshakeh* spake falsly concerning *Hezekiah*, is often too true of our Policies and Stratagems. *What confidence is this, wherein we trust? We say (but they are but vain words) we have Counsel, and strength for the warr.* But talk, and think, what we will; No Counsel shall prosper against his determination to punish a rebellious People. For what sayes he in *Esay* 46. c. 10, 11? *My Counsell shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure, calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my Counsel, from a far Country; yea I have spoken it, and I will bring it to pass. I have purposed it, I will also do it.*

2 Kings 18, 19, 20.

Esay 46. 10. 11.

We are apt on all sides to lay the blame on *evil Counsel.*

Counſell. How readily do we charge our Miſeries on this *mans Treaſon*, or the others *Folly*? If ſuch a one had been *wiſe*, or *honeſt*, to have adviſed the *Prince* in good time, or ſuch an one had not been *falſe*, to *reveal* his *counſels*, or conſpire againſt him, none of theſe Calamities had followed. But fools as we are, not to think of our own *ſins*, that are the true *cauſes* of all our miſcarriages, the reſt are but *Occaſions*. When God is reſolved to viſit a People in Judgement, *he catches the wiſe in their own craft*, and turns the *counſels* of the *Sages* of the Nation, like thoſe of the *Oracle*, *Achitophel*, *into fooliſhneſs*. 2 Sam. 15 31. And by his Providence he blaſts the beſt directions; 2 Sam. 16 23 either making *wiſe adviſes* to be rejected as *vain*, or 2 Sam. 17. 5, 6, 7, 8. raiſing up a *Huſhai* to match *Achitophel*, a Craftyer Verſ. 14. then they, to counterwork all their Plots, and bring them to confuſion.

This ſhould teach us not to look on any kind of Inſtruments, *evil Counſellours*, or others, that God makes uſe of, for our chaſtiſement. How apt have we all along been to complain, (and yet this Miſtake is not purged out of us to this day) againſt this mans *Craft* and the others *Folly*; againſt this mans *Raſhneſs* and the others *Treachery*; this *Laymans Faction*, and that *Prieſts ſeditious Rhetorick*; this *Tradeſmans Covetouſneſs*, and that *Gentlemans Malice*; this *Citizens Pride*, and that *Courtiers Ambition*? But have we thought of our *ſins*, and of our *God*, whoſe Providence and Wiſdome has overruled our own *ſins*, to be our own *Puniſhments*? Sure things had been far better, if we had looked up to God, and adored the ſtrange *Abyſs* of his wiſdome in all our Puniſhment, and had not fallen on *Inferiour Agents*,

that can do nothing of themselves, but onely as he directs.

For as he has *Power* and *Wisdome*, so he has the onely *Right* to chastise. He is not onely *the Lord of hosts*, but *the mighty one of Israel* too, to shew his *Right* and *Authority* to punish: none can do it, but
Amos 3. 5,6. He. for as the Prophet asks the Question *Amos* 3. *vers.* 5, 6. *Can a bird fall in a snare upon the earth, where no ginne is for him? Shall there be evil in a City, and the Lord hath not done it?* He it is, that *hisses for*
Esay 7. 17. *the Fly* (the Horsemen) *in the uttermost parts of the Rivers of Ægypt*, and *for the Bee* (the spear and arrow) *that is in the Land of Assyria*, Esay 7. 17. And he usually rewards them with unexpected success, whom he raises for vengeance. *O Assyria, the rod*
Esay 10, 5,6. *of mine Anger, and the staff in their hand is my Indignation. I will send him against an hypocriticall Nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like mire in the streets.* Hence it is that God compares him to a *Rasor* that is *hired* for this
Esay 7. 20. purpose, *Esay* 7. 20. And for this cause he calls
Esay 45. 1, 2,3. *Cyrus* his *anointed*, whom he had raised up unexpectedly to the throne, and prospered him *to beat down the Gates of Brass, and loose the loynes of Kings, and receive the Treasures of Darkness*, Esay 45. v. 1,2,3.

The Instruments of all our Miseries, could never have been able to have done any thing against us, unless God had not onely given it them in *charge*, but *assisted* them to do it. We blame their *Pride* and and *Covetousness* and *Ambition*; and we do not amiss. But our spoyles and Plunder were the *wages*, God bestowed upon them for their service.

And

And they were Gods *Hirelings*, when *they knew it not*, and onely deſigned to ſerve their luſts, and obey their own ambitions. Even heathen *Cyrus* was *Gods Anointed*, though he was ignorant of him. And the *Aſſyrian* was his *hired ſervant*, *howbeit*, as it is in our Prophet, *that he meant not ſo*, *but onely to deſtroy and cut off Nations not a few.* Eſay 45. 1, 4. Eſay 10. 6, 7.

This ſhould help to bury our *Animoſities* on all ſides. Conſider we, that they have been Gods inſtruments, his *Fire* and *Hammer* to *break* us for the *Furnace*, and *melt* us from our *droſs* and *Tin*. The Divel, Gods Executioner, and wicked men his ſubſtitutes, are all but in a *chain*. They could not fall on *Jobs* cattel, or ſubſtance, or touch his Perſon, till God gave them leave. Nay they could not enter into the *Gadarens Swine*, without *Chriſts* permiſſion. Job 1 9, 10, 11. Mark 5. 12, 13

And yet God, in this, is not the Author, nor Abetter of their ſin, no more then the Apothecary *begets* the Scorpion and the Viper, which he makes into an Antidote; or the Goldſmith *Creates* the Fire, whoſe Fury he makes uſe of, to refine his Metall. The Sinner is a Sinner ſtill. *Judas* was never a whit the leſs *Traitor*, or the *Jews* leſs *Parricides*, the one in *betraying*, the other in *murdering the Lord of life*, becauſe by their malice God brought redemption to the world, by the death of his Son. And herein appears, as well the ſtrange *wiſdome*, as the *Power* of God, that he can make uſe of the ſins of men to puniſh a wicked People, and yet himſelf be juſt and innocent.

Truth is, God need not be the *Author* of *ſin* (if it were poſſible) that ſo he may become the *Author*

of *Punishment*. If *Sathan*, the Executioner of Gods Vengeance be but loosed, he will do it fast enough. If God but once remove his *hedge* of Providence about us, he will bring *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, *winds* and *tempest*, *fire* and *brimstone*, *botches*, *plagues* and *diseases* more then enough for such a purpose. Nay if the Divel were not a *roaring Lyon*, *still running up and down to devour us*, yet wicked men have sinns enough to devour one another, to punish themselves while they refine others. The fire in the Fornace, whilest it *melts* the Metal, *consumes* it self. The upper and the nether Milstone, as they grind the good Corn between them, so they wear out one another.

Job 1. 2.

1 Pet. 5. 8.

The *Moralist observes of the two opposite vices, that they are more Enemy one to the other, then to the middle vertue between them. And we had too sad experience of this in our late unnatural war. Had we any need to prompt on the *debauched Cavalier* against the *hypocriticall pretender*? or of *Curse ye Meroz* to stir up the *Zelot* to *come in to the help of the Lord against the Mighty*? Their own contrary humours and passions would make them fight, and with eagerness enough, to one anothers destruction.

* Οὕτω δ' ἀντικεμένων ἀλλήλοις τούτων, πλείων ἐναντιότης ἐστὶ τοῖς ἄκροις πρὸς ἄλληλα, ἢ πρὸς τὸ μέσον. Arist. Eth. Nicom. l. 2. c. 8.

The time will not give me leave to shew you *how* God makes use of the sinner for the punishing his servants, and purifying them from their dross. Sufficient it is for the present Point, that *he does* it, and onely for his *Peoples* sake. And this hints unto us the *Persons melted*, his *People*, his *Chosen*; the next Circumstance.

And it is *Thee Judah* and *Jerusalem*, his own People.

ple. God will not loſe his Art and Pains on thoſe, that are without the Pale of the viſible Church. *You onely*, ſayes he in [a] *Amos, have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I puniſh you for all your iniquities*, Amos 3. 2. This was a [b] Priviledge God granted them, when he promiſed *Abram* that the Church ſhould ſpring out of his loines. *Thy ſeed ſhall be ſtrangers in a forreign land, and afflicted for foure hundred years together.* A long time this to be in the Melting Pot! But the ſilver muſt not out till purified. The ſame Promiſe he renews to *David*, 2 Sam. 7. 14. *I will be his Father and he ſhall be my ſon: if he commit iniquity I will chaſten him with the rod of men, and with the ſtripes of the children of men, but my mercy ſhall not depart from him.*

[a] Amos 3. 2.
[b] Philip. 1. 29
Gen. 15. 13, 14
2 Sam. 7. 14.

Though this may ſeem ſomewhat unworthy the *generouſneſs* of *Faith*, that the *Chriſtian* ſhould, as it were, be *dragged* and *haled* unto Goodneſs, becauſe the *Whip* is for *Slaves*, and the *Rod for the back of Fools*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, yet this is Gods uſuall Method, and which ſeldome fails of ſucceſs. The beſt of all Gods Saints, *from him that ſitteth on the throne, to him that grindeth at the mill*, muſt *through much tribulation enter into the kingdome of God.* The *Ram*, the embleme of our Saviour, that ſaved *Iſaac* from the ſlaughter, was caught in a *Thicket*. The Church, though ſhe be a *Lilly*, is planted among *thorns*. And the *Captain of our ſalvation*, becauſe a Surety for ſinners, was *made perfect through ſufferings.*

Prov. 26. 3. & c. 10. 13. c. 29. 15.
Act. 14. 22.
Gen. 22. 13.
Cantic. 2. 2.
Heb. 2. 10.
Rev. 11. 4.

It is in *heaven* onely, where the Saints are without *ſin*, that they are without *ſorrow*. Where no droſs or *ruſt can corrupt*, there needs no *Furnace*, no *Scouring.*

Mat. 6. 10.

But

Rom. 3. 11. But here the case is otherwise, *we are all an unclean thing*: and *Adam's* Curse, and his Sweat and his Labour and Sorrow, are together with his sin entayled upon us. The best of us all * *have our treasure* but *in earthen vessels*: and though our † Gold and Silver be *begun* and perfected by the † *Influences* of *heaven*, yet because they are begotten in the * *Bowels* of the *Earth*, they are *earth* too, and the rich ‖ *Ore* must be brought to the *Fire*, and the *Melting Pot* before it can be cleansed from the *drosse*.

* 2 Cor. 4. 7.
† James 1. 17
Rectè Metallorum ortus tribuitur Cœlesti calori, etsi consistentiam à frigore recipiant. Valesius Philos. sac. c. 49. p. 239.
* Metalla omnia generantur sub terrâ. Valesius ibid. pag. 237. vid. Georg. Agricol. de re Metall. l. 3. p. 54. & de subterr. ortu & caus. l. 5.
‖ Vide Valesius philos. sac. pag. 238.

Gen. 11. 28. vid. Ainsworth in loc.

And therefore it is the less to be wondered at, that we can not any where turn in this book of God, but we shall find eminent Examples of it. Even *Abraham* the *Father of the Faithfull*, before he can be *called the Friend of God*, he must leave his Native Country, and his Fathers house, and pass through *Ur* of the *Chaldeans*: that is, say the * *Rabbins*, he must be cast into a fiery Fornace by that Idolatrous People from whence he escaped by Miracle, that he might flee from their Pollutions. But be the story what it will, yet * *Ur*, in that language signifies *fire*, and shews us this lesson, that *many are the troubles of the Righteous*, though *the Lord delivers them out of all*. What think you of *Moses the meekest man alive*? Before he can become a *God* to *Pharaoh* and a *Leader* of *Israel*, he must be weaned for *forty* years together from the vices of *Ægypt* and the dalliances of *Pharaohs* Court. What say you to *David*, *the man after Gods own heart*? Take him from the sheep-

* Vid. Targum Jonathan Ben. Uziel. c. 11. v. 28.

* אשר אור לו בעיון
cujus ignis est in *Sion*.
Esay 31. 9.
Psal. 34. 19.
Num. 12, 3.
Exod. 7. 1.
Exod. 3. 10.
Acts 7. 35,
Acts 7. 30.
1 Sam. 13. 14.

cote

cote to the Throne, and you ſhall find him either in the *Jaw* of the *Lion*, or the *Paw* of the *Bear*, or the *Sword* of *Goliah*, or the *Spear* of *Saul*; in *deaths and perils often*. His enemies *mighty* for their *Power*. Pſal. 38. and more then *the hairs of his head for number* Pſal. 69. his troubles at home, abroad, in *Jewry*, *Paleſtine*, in *Gath*, in *Jeruſalem*, in the Cottage, in the Throne, in the Court, in the Camp, ſo many I cannot count them: for he himſelf, that ſuffered them, ſayes that they are *innumerable*, Pſal. 40. and theſe, many of them ſo ſharp, that they *made him rore through the very diſquietneſs of his Soul*. Mark the good man and the Perfect, *Job*, and you ſhall find him on a *Dunghil*, and in the middeſt of the *Aſhes* with a *Potſheard* in his hand, to ſcrape his *ſores*. And ſo great was his afflictions, that this *miracle* of *Patience* will not *refrain his Mouth, but he will ſpeak in the anguiſh of his ſpirit, and complain in the bitterneſs of his ſoul*.

1 Sam. 17 36, 37. 50, 51. 1 Sam. 19. 10. Pſal. 38. 19. Pſal. 69. 4. Pſal. 40. 12. Pſal. 38. 8. Job 1. 1. &c. 2. 3. Pſal. 37. 37. Job 2. 8. Job 7. 11.

And therefore, *beloved, think it not ſtrange concerning the fiery tryalls*, that have *tryed* us. You ſee no *new thing* happens unto us. The beſt of Saints have had their *meltings*, as well as we of this Nation. The † *droſs* and *Tin* cleave ſo cloſe to their beſt and pureſt Metall, that there is no taking it away, nor purging it out, without the *Crucible* and *Melting Pot*.

1 Pet. 4. 11.

† Excoquam igne tribulationis, ſordes & vitia purgando, ut ſeparato ſtanno purum remaneat argentum; quod abſque igne fieri non poteſt: unde quaſi ignis conflans. Malach. 3. Gloſſ. Ordinar. in Eſa. 1. 25.

Nay it is the greater wonder, if we were not truly Gods People, that he ſhould *turn his hand upon us*. If we were *Reprobate Silver*, God would throw

us to the durt of the ſtreet, and not into the Melting Pot. The Refiner will not put the * *Marcheſite* into the Fornace, becauſe though it gliſters like *Gold*, yet it is but a *ſtone*. God will not *loſe* his *Art* and *Pains* on ſuch *adulterate* ware. For what ſayes he in the Prophet of theſe, *Jer.* 6. 28,29,30. *They are Braſs and Iron, they are all corrupters* (and have nothing of precious Metal in them) *The Bellows are burnt, the* ** *Lead is conſumed of the fire, the Founder melteth in vain. For the wicked are not plucked away. Reprobate ſilver ſhall men call them, becauſe the Lord hath rejected them.* Such *Revolters* as theſe, notwithſtanding their *gilded outſides* are unworthy of his *skill*. And therefore he cryes out, *why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more, ye will revolt more and more?* Since it is not in the Power of his Art to *refine* them, he withdraws his hand, and lets them alone to *proſper* in their *wickedneſs*, that they may be ſcourges to the Saints, *leaſt they return again to Folly. Behold theſe are the ungodly that proſper in the world; they are not in trouble as other men; therefore Pride compaſſeth them.* But *this their way is their folly*, their *happineſs* is their *curſe*. They are in *ſlippery places*. And *O how ſuddenly do they conſume? How are they brought into deſolation as in a moment? they are utterly conſumed with Terrors.*

And therefore, beloved, this ſhould be our rejoycing, that we have been in the *Melting Pot*; and we ſhould count our ſelves happy, that God has *turned his hand upon us*. This ſhews that as we have been

* Dantur quædam mixta, quæ, metallicam naturam utcunq; æmulantur, plenè non aſſequuntur; ſimul enim ad lapidum naturam deflectunt. Hæc duorum ordinum, Priora Marcheſitæ nomen obtinuere. &c. Mocenic. p. 336.

Jerem. 6. verſ. 28,29, 30.

**Plumbum in examine perfectorum (metallorum) adhibitum, imperfecta abſumit, & una per fumum abripit, aut in ſcorias convertit Sennert. Inſtitut. Phyſ. l. 5. c. 5 p. 401.

Eſay 1. 5.

Pſal. 73. 3.
Pſal. 85. 8.
Pſal. 73. 5, 6, 12.

Pſal. 49. 13.
Pſal. 73. 18
verſ. 19.

been under his *Artifice*, ſo we are with him in *eſteem*, otherwiſe the Founder would not *melt* us. Whatſoever our Enemies ſcandalouſly ſay againſt us, it ſeems there is ſomething in us of his Grace and Goodneſs left. The *Droſs* and the *Tin* have not *eaten* out all our precious metal, but to the glory of his Grace be it ſpoken, we retain ſomething (as I hope our lives and converſations and future amendment ſhall teſtifie) ſomething of that Treaſure, which the workman at firſt founding did put into the veſſel. As we have been a long time in the *Crucible*, and under the *Hammer* and the *Croſs*, ſo we have been under his *Art* and his *Care* and *Protection* too.

And this, as it may argue us to *belong* to *the houſhold of faith*, ſo it may aſſure us of Gods *love* and *reſpect* towards us. If he were not *our Father that begat us*, he would not trouble himſelf thus to diſcipline and correct us. *Whom the Lord loveth he chaſtneth*, ſayes the Apoſtle, *Heb.* 12. 6. and he *ſcourgeth every ſon, whom he receiveth. But if ye be without chaſtiſement, whereof all are Partakers, then are ye Baſtards and not Sons.* Heb. 12, 6, 7.

Away then with thoſe that Cenſure the Church or Good men, when they are under the Scourge, and caſt into the *Melting Pot*. Thoſe that ſeem ὡς περικαθάρματα *as the filth of the world, and off-ſcouring of all things*, fit for nothing in the eyes of men, but to be burned and deſtroyed, are now in Gods more *immediate cuſtody*, when they are in the *Fornace*. Now they are the *Objects* of his *Art* and *Skil*, his *Care* and *Love*. Now the Founder is about his *buſineſs* and *Trade*; and he more immediately attends 1 Cor. 4. 13. vid. Bezam in locum.

upon them, to purifie them from their *droſs* and their *Tin*, and cleanſe and new faſhion them. Though carnall men looked on us, as caſt away by God, yet the iſſue hath ſhewed that all our *croſſes* and *afflictions* have been onely in order to our *ſcouring*, and as we have been under Gods *Protection*, while we were in the *Crucible*, ſo we were in his account in the readieſt way to *honour*. And this hints unto us our next circumſtance, the manner *how* God refines his People: it is by *fire* and *melting*. And I will *purge*, and *take away*.

וְאָצְרְפָה כְּ πυρόω. LXX. —Excoquet omnes ſordes —ut ſepara. to ſtanno purum argentũ remaneat, quod abſque igne fieri non poteſt, per quod ſignificat eos paſſuros eſſe tormenta. Hier. in loc. vid. Lyram in loc.

And though the Method be *ſharp*, yet it is for all that *neceſſary*. *Droſs* and *Tin* will never be got out with all the *waſhing* and *ſcouring* in the world. There is nothing but the *Fire* can do it. Who ſees not but that our *Corn* muſt paſs under the *flaile* and the *Mill*, before it can be cleanſed from the *Chaff*, and dreſſed from the *Bran* to be *Shewbread for the Sanctuary*? The Grapes muſt be *trod* in the *wine-preſs*, and *boil* and *work* in the *Fatt*, the Juice muſt be *racked* and *drawn*, and *impriſoned* in the *Cask*, before the Wine will be fully purified from the *ſtone* and the *Husk*, the *Muſt* and the *Lees*, and fitted for our *Saviours* drinking in *his Fathers kingdome*. Though *Iſrael* be Gods *choſen vine*, a *plant which his own right hand hath planted*, yet the luxuriant Branches muſt come under the diſcipline and ſtroke of the *Pruning hook*, before it will be fruitfull.

Eſay 5. 2, Jer. 2. 21.

And therefore God in Scripture is compared to a *Vine-dreſſer*, a *Gardener*, that is nothing without the *Spade*, and the *Hough*, and the *Pruning-knife*; to a

Eſay 5. 1.

Husbandman

Husbandman, that must tear the bowels of the Earth with the *Plough* and the *Harrow*, before he can kill the weeds, and fit the soyle for the seed; to a *Refiner*, as here in the Text, that is nothing without his *Aqua fortis*, and *Melting pot*, his *fire*, and *waters of Separation*. Joh. 15 1. 1 Cor. 3. 9.

And this as it serves to represent the *Sharpness* of the *Affliction*, that God often brings upon his People, so it shews the *deepness* of their *sinne* and *Pollution*.

God sends not Nationall Judgements for *ordinary* common sins. Those he leaves to the *Sword* of the *Magistrate*. It is for the *dross* and the *Tin*, notorious debaucheries, and grosse and scandalous sins, and gilded Hypocrisies, that have *imbodyed* themselves in the pretious Metal, and have run through the whole substance, and overspread the whole Nation, and are too *big* for the Law.

If you read in the foregoing Part of the Chapter, you shall find the *Princes rebellious, and companions of Thieves*, the Courts of Justice made *Exchanges* and *Mercates* to sell the *Causes* of the *Poor* for the *Briberies* of the *Rich*; nothing but following *after gifts and rewards*; no Judging of the *Fatherless*, nor the Cause of the *Widdow* regarded. *The faithfull City was become an Harlot, and instead of Judgement and Righteousness, nothing* now but *Murderers* to be found in it. The *hands full of blood*, the *mouth* full of *blasphemies* and cursing and lyes, the *head* full of *covetousness* and *projects* to gain *Estates*, and the *heart* full of *hypocrisie*, and dissembling with God and Man. Esay 1. 23. vers. 21.

For still they are for the *outside* and *cheap forms* of devo- v. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

devotion. Much *treading Gods Courts*, and *sanctifying the Sabbaths*, and *calling solemn Assemblies*, and multitude of *Sacrifices*, and *spreading forth the hands*, and *making many prayers*.

Their silver, as it is verse the 22. was now become so *drossy* and embased, that no *Lotion* was sufficient, though of *Fullers sope*, or *Nitre*; no *scouring* or *cleansing*, though of *Putty* and *Oyle*, will serve the turn. The *Laws* and *Punishments* of the Nation are too *weak*, and the *Preachings* of the *Prophets* not *regarded*. None but such *active Instruments* as the *fire* and the *flame*, that *pierce* into the very *substance*, and *dissolve* the *Metal*, is sufficient for the work.

And this should teach us, not to *repine* at Gods *Judgements*, but to be *angry* with our *sins*, that *force* as it were, the *Almighty* against his own *gracious* inclination to wound and chastise us. *Wherefore*, sayes
Lam.3.39.40 the Prophet *Jeremy*, Lament.3. 39, 40. *doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins? Let us search and try our wayes, and turn unto the Lord our God.*

For to our Comfort it is, God will not cast us off, *his mercies are not clean gone*, even in the very midst of our Afflictions. *Though*, as it is Lament. 3.
Lam.3.32,33 32, 33. *he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* We
Esay 1.24. יהוא נחם* see he sighs and laments and cryes * *Ah*, when he
Plangit antem clementissimus Pater Principes delinquentes, &c. Hieron. in loc quem vid. & Lyram. rouzes himself to *ease* him of his *Adversaries*, *and avenge him of his enemies*: and therefore when he *turns his hand* upon his *People*, we may be well assured, that his strokes are onely the *disciplines* of a *Father*, and the *launcings* of a *Surgeon*, not the *wounds*

of

of an *Executioner*. And though he *kindle a Fire* about us, yet it is onely to *melt* and *refine* us from our *droſs* and our *Tin*, and not to *deſtroy us*. Which hints unto us the end of Gods Judgements, the next Circumſtance.

It is, I will *purely purge away thy droſs, and take away all thy Tin.* וְאָצְרֹף כַּבֹּר Καὶ πυρώσω σε εἰς καθαρὸν τὴν σκωρίαν σου. LXX. ſecund. M. S. Angl. καὶ πυρώσω εἰς καθαρὸν τὴν σκωρίαν σου. Symmach. in Druſii Fragment. Veter. Interpr. Græ. in Eſai pag. 286.

Though their ſinful Condition requires this *ſharp Artifice*; yet is there *mercy* in this *fiery tryal*. Though it purge out the *droſs* and *Tin*, yet the *fire* is a kind of *Lambent* flame to *puriſie* the precious Metal, not *conſume it*. The Gold, like that of † *Aaron*, is caſt into the *fornace*, that it come forth a *ſtatue*: but not like that which † *Moſes* caſt there (that by a ſtrange *unheard of *Chymiſtry* was *calcined* and *ground to Powder*) for a final *abolition*. *I know O Lord*, ſayes *David*, Pſal. 119. 75. *that thy Judgements are right, and that thou in faithfullneſs haſt afflicted me.* Whatſoever Carnal men may think, it is a mercy to be in the Melting Pot. Afflictions make us know our ſelves, our ſins, our God. *Before I was afflicted, I went wrong*, ſayes *David*, *but now have I kept thy word.* And he obſerves it of *Iſrael*, a whole Nation, Pſal. 78. 34. *When he ſlew them, they ſought him, and returned, and enquired early after God.*

† Exod. 32. 24.

† verſ. 22.

* Ὁ δὲ χρυσὸς μόνος ἄπυρος. Ariſt. l. 3. Meteor. c. 6.

Pſal. 119. 67.

Pſal. 78. 34.

And therefore ſayes *Solomon*, *the fining pot is for ſilver, and the fornace for Gold, and the Lord tryeth the heart.* And how is that? Let *Malachi* tell you, c. 3. 3. *For he is like a Refiners fire, and like Fullers ſope,*

Prov. 17. 3.

Mal. 3. 3.

ſope, *and he ſhall ſit as a Refiner and a Purifier of Silver.* And we know by experience, that the *Hammer* of the *Goldſmith*, and the *flame*, and the *Crucible* is not to *deſtroy* the precious Metal, but to *cleanſe* and *faſhion* it. And what it *looſes* of its *droſs* and *Tin*, it *gains* in *luſtre* and *brightneſs*, in *purity* and *worth*.

For that is the *end* of Gods Artifice and Pains, that being purified, he might put us into the mold, and faſhion us to be *veſſels unto honour, ſanctified, and*
2 Tim. 2. 21. *meet for the Maſters uſe, and prepared unto every good*
Malachi 3. 3, 4. *work.* For it follows *Malachi* 3. v. 3, 4. *And he ſhall purifie the ſons of Levi, and purge them as Gold and Silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in Righteouſneſs. Then ſhall the offerings of Judah and Jeruſalem be pleaſant unto the Lord, as in the dayes of* old, *and as in* former *times.* And that we may be ſure that this is *Goſpel-method*, and diſciplines of *Grace*,
Mat. 3. 27. the *Baptiſt* will tell you, *Mat.* 3. 27. that the great Founder and reſtorer of his Church *ſhall baptize with the holy Ghoſt and with fire; that his Fan is in his hand, and that he will throughly purge his Floore and gather his wheat into his Garner, and burn up the Chaff with unquenchable fire.*

This made the good Father S. *Auſtin* cry out, *hic ure, hic ſeca, Domine, ut in æternum parcas*, Lord let me have my hell here upon earth, that I may have my heaven and happineſs hereafter. I care not, how ſharp my Afflictions be, ſince they are for my amendment: if what I loſe in my Eſtate, and my Liberty and good Name, I gain in Chriſtian Purity, and Meekneſs and Patience; if I dye at the *ſtake*, or on a *Gibbet*, or a *Scaffold*, if that death prove a
1 Cor. 5. 5 *Martyrdome*, and I be *delivered unto Sathan for the deſtruction*

ſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit may be ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus.

Oh beloved! me thinks there cannot be a greater comfort to believers, nor a ſtronger ſupport to them in the middeſt of their afflictions, then to conſider, that when they are in the *fining pot*, they are in the way to ſpirituall advancement; that God delights not in the tormenting of their bodies, but aims at the ſalvation of their ſouls. Gods end in theſe ſharp Methods ſhews his Love and reſpect towards them. The care he takes in Melting, and *purely purging out our droſs*, and *taking away all our Tin*, manifeſts, that he then moſt prizes us, when to Carnall worldly men, that triumph in our miſeries, we ſeem as loſt and gone in the fire of Indignation. And therefore the Apoſtle ſenſible of the love of God, even in the middeſt of our tryals, cryes out in behalf of believers, 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9, 10. *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed, perſecuted but not forſaken, caſt down but not deſtroyed, alwayes bearing about in the body the marks of the Lord Jeſus, that the life alſo of Jeſus might be made manifeſt in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jeſus ſake, that the life alſo of Jeſus may be made manifeſt in our mortal fleſh.* 2 Cor. 4. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Let then the *Atheiſt* and the *proſperous* ſinner boaſt of *Providences* and *ſucceſs*, whilſt we, when good men are oppreſſed and ſlain, and the *blood* of *Princes* and of *Nobles* is poured out like *water* in the ſtreets, do glory in the *croſs* of Chriſt, that fits us for a *Crown*.

But then as the Conſideration of the Cauſe *Progoumenal* and *Final*, Gods love to us in Chriſt, that

alone inwardly moves him, and his great *end* and *aim*, the purifying and saving of our souls by these sharp disciplines, should serve to *support* us in the middest of our Calamities: so it should serve to *humble* us under his hand, when we consider the *Procatartick* and *Meritorious* Cause, that from *without* stirs up God to cast us into the Melting Pot, our *dross* and our *Tin*, that have corrupted and embased our precious Metall. And that is the next thing considerable.

And happy it is for *Judah* and *Jerusalem* that God promises to purge out their *dross* and *Tin*. For no greater enemies to Gold and Silver then these. They corrupt and embase the precious metall, and make it cheap and contemptible. Nothing so vile in Gods esteem as the Sinner. This *dross* and *Tin*, this pollution that is in him, makes the great Artist not delight in the *work* of his own hands, nor value that *Purchase*, which he bought with his own blood.

It is true, as the * Refiners have observed, the finest Gold, let it be *purified seven times in the fire*, will still retain some mixture of *Alloy*. Grace, though it sanctifie nature never so much, yet so long as we are in the flesh, we shall have a touch of our fleshly corruptions. As the best man that is, ‖ *falls seven times a day*: so is it true of *Nations* and *Churches*. The * *Corn* and *Tares*, and *Chaff* will be mixed in the threshing-flore, till the winnowing day

* Est Obriza examen seu probatio per ignem acerrimum, qua omnis fere alienæ materiæ admixtio excernitur. Vid. Budæ. l. 3. de Asse. dixi (ferè) nam eousque excoqui aurum posse, ut caractæ unius quadrans tantum relinquatur materiæ alienæ, &c. Brerewood de Ponder. & Pret. cap. 22.

‖ Prov. 24. 16.

* Mat. 13. 39, 40.

day comes. The * *net* of the Goſpel catches the Fiſh of all ſorts, the bad as well as good, and no ſorting them as yet, till the Net comes to ſhore. There will be ſinners as well as Saints, in the Pale of the viſible Church, till the day of Separation of the Sheep from the Goats. The onely Church *without ſpot or wrinckle, is Jeruſalem, that is above.* * 47,48,49. Eph. 5. 27. Gal. 4. 26.

And therefore when God promiſes he *will purely purge* away the *droſs*, and take away all the *Tin*, it is not to be expected that any ſingle *Saint* ſhould arrive to an abſolute ſinleſs perfection in this life, much leſs that a *Nation* ſhould. For then there would not be work for *Mortification*, *Repentance*, and *godly ſorrow* for ſin, and the *Magiſtrate* would be uſeleſs, and truly *bear the ſword in vain*; Our Purity conſiſts, in not ſuffering ſin, as the Apoſtle adviſes, to *reign in our mortall bodies, that we ſhould obey it in the luſts thereof*, that the *droſs* and the *Tin* be ſo purged out of a people, that its brightneſs may appear, that the ſinner may be every where diſcouraged, and vertue and Godlineſs eminently advanced. Rom. 13. 4. Rom. 6. 11.

Purgatio ad liquidum ut nulla ſcoria maneat, non ita debet intelligi, quaſi Deus Eccleſiam ſuam in hoc mundo penitus unquam abſtergat ab omni labe (ſed) ut inſtar mundi argenti reluceat. Vera pietas notatur, cum ante Judæi ſibi in facibus ſuis nimium placuiſſent. Calvin. in loc.

As then it is not to be expected that the Artiſt ſhould purifie his Gold and Silver, till it be wholly without *Alloy*; ſo ſuch Purity as this, is not the *Object* of the great Founders skill and Pains. For in the next verſe he promiſes to *reſtore our Judges as at the firſt, and our Counſellours as at the beginning*; and this ſuppoſes that ſtill there will be buſineſs for the *private Chriſtian*, and the *publick Magiſtrate*. They are Publick, Scandalous, Open ſins, of a *Crimſon die* Iſay 1. 18.

and a ſpreading nature, that as they corrupt, and embaſe, ſo they run and diffuſe themſelves through all the good Metal, that here God promiſes to purge, and take away. They are *Nationall ſins*, which are too *big* for the Law, that call for *Nationall Judgements*.

Some by droſs underſtand groſs iniquity: by Tin glittering Hypocriſie; or perſons openly prophane by the one, inwardly unſound by the other. Which may well be, for that Tin carryeth an outward reſemblance of ſilver. &c. Aſſemb. Not. in loc. Confer. Calvin in Iſa. cap. 1. v. 22.

And theſe the Prophet elegantly deſcribes under the Metaphor of *droſs* and *Tin*. The droſs: what's that? It denotes the groſs and *palpable* impieties, that are open to every eye, that Nature as well as Grace diſcovers and condemns. The weakeſt ſight that is can diſcern the droſs, from the Silver. And therefore ſaies the Apoſtle * *the works of the fleſh are manifeſt*.

* Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

Eſay 1. 4 16, 17, 21, 23

And this was *Jeruſalems* Pollution. Abundance of droſs in it: Rebellions, Thievery, Plunder, Bribery, Oppreſſion, Murder, Blood, what not? and this *from the ſole of the foot even to the head*, the corruption was *univerſal*. And yet though her impieties were ſo groſſe and palpable, the more to embaſe her precious Metal, ſhe adds *Tin* unto her *droſs*, and masks her notorious wickedneſs with the veyle of Religion. Much *treading Gods Courts*, and making *many prayers*, and *ſanctifying of Sabbaths*, and calling *ſolemn Aſſemblies*, and heaping *Sacrifice* upon *Sacrifice*, while *the hands are full of blood*.

verſ. 6.

verſ 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

And this was the Aggravation of their ſin, that they added *Hypocriſie* to *Prophaneſs*, that they *faſted for ſtrife and debate, and ſtriking with the fiſt of Wickedneſs*, that they had much pretence of Religion and Godlineſs in the face and tongue, when rapine and ſacrilege,

Eſay 58. 4.

ſacriledge, and bribery, and Covetouſneſs, and Rebellion was in the heart. The Divel is never more a Divel then when he puts on the ſhape of *an Angel of light.* And it was the height of *Jezabels* impiety, that ſhe *ſanctified a faſt*, and counterfeited Religion to hide her Bloodſhed and Perjury, and Injuſtice and Rapine. By this the ſinner gains him not onely *ſecurity*, but *Reputation* to his higheſt crimes, and *Multitudes* to follow him. And this makes Hypocriſie, of all others, to be the moſt hateſull thing to God; and our Saviour ſo often and ſo paſſionately to cry out, *Wo unto you Scribes and Phariſees, Hyppocrites.* 2 Cor. 11. 14. 1 Kings 21. 9. Mat. 11. 13, 14, 15.

The Prophet excellently deſcribes the Nature and Property of this Vice, under the Metaphor of *Tin.*

For firſt, Tin is very * like to Silver in colour, though it hath nothing of the ſubſtance of it: ſo the Apoſtle tells us of Hypocrites, that they *have the form of Godlineſs, but deny the power of it*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5.

* Ex ſtanno vaſa domeſtica ducta in menſarum uſu argenteis fulgore comparantur.

Cimbden. Britan. in Cornub. Quamvis autem ſtannum æmuletur quodammodo argenti ſplendorem, tamen longe eſt melius & ab igne magis exeditur. Magir. Hvſ l. 5. c. 1. in comment 1. Convenit argentum cum ſtanno in albedine, magis tamen album eſt, quoniam ipſius terreſtre eſt magis tenue, magis lotum, ac magis digeſtum. Philip Mocenici univerſ. Inſtitut. contemp 4. p. 2 c 6. p 334. Propter cruditatem & volatilitatem dicitur imperfectum: verè quidem cum incoctum ratione cruditatis imperfectum dici mereatur. P. Io. Fabri Panchym. vol. 2. l. 4. ſect. 7, c. 27.

Secondly, the Naturaliſts tell us that Tin is never found to grow by it ſelf as all other Metals do, but

Stannum differt ab albo plumbo, quod hoc per ſe oritur, illud autem ſemper cum argento. Magir. loc. citato. Invenitur & in auratiis metallis, quæ elutia vocant. Plin. Nat. hiſt. l. 34 c. 16. Plumbum aut ſuâ provenit venâ: nec quicquam aliud ex ſe parit, aut cum argento naſcitur, miſtiſque venis conflatur. Ejus, qui primus fluit in fornacibus liquor, ſtannum appellatur; qui ſecundus, argentum. Plin. ibid.

onely in Mines of *Gold* and *Silver*: ſo the Hypocrite wil never put on the ſhape of devotion among a company of *Atheiſts*. He will be ſure to act his part to the purpoſe, where the *true* religion is profeſſed; there he is a Phariſee to the height; ſtill at his † *touch me not*, *I am holier then thou*, there and in the * *Temple*, ſtill at his *Lord I thank thee I am not as other men, no not as this Publican*, though never ſo humble and penitently devout.

† Eſay 65.5.
* Luk. 18. 10, 11, 12.

Conſtat ſtannum ſubſtantiâ rariore, & minus excocta; quare —& liquores ſubtiliores tranſmittit, ut vinum deſtillatum, & medicamenta pretioſa. Magirus loc. citat.

Thirdly they obſerve, that Tin by reaſon of the *thinneſs*, and *rarity* of the ſubſtance, will not hold *ſpiritous* bodies, and that pretious *oyles* and rich *ſpirits* evaporate away through it: ſo though the Hypocrite *pretend* much to the *ſpirit*, yet the rich *graces* of the ſpirit dwell not in him. Saint *Jude* will tell you that *theſe mockers walking after their own ungodly luſts, ſeparate themſelves having not the ſpirit.*

Jude verſ. 19.

† Stannum balbutientem complexionem habet, cæteris metallis admixtum ea ſimiliter balbutire facit, ab illiſque ductibilitatem aufert. Mocenicus loc. citat.

Tin is ſaid being mixt with gold and ſilver, to make them harder or ſhorter and more brittle. Aſſembl. notes in loc.

Plumbum inimicitiam gerit cum omnibus metallis, præſertim cum ſit *album*, auroque & argento vel centeſima parte additum, fragilia ea reddit. Magir. loc. citat.

Fourthly, the Mineraliſts obſerve that Tin is of a † ſtubborn nature, and that if mixed with gold or ſilver, it makes them harder and leſs *ductile* and pliable; but apt to cracks and flaws; more ſhort, and brittle. And S. *Jude* and S. *Peter* and S. *Paul* will tell you that the Hypocrite is never good ſubject, but one that [a] *deſpiſes dominion*, *and ſpeaks evil of dignities*; that they are [b] *Traitors*, *heady*, *high minded*, that though they know not how to rule; yet leſs know how to obey, [c] crumbling the Church

a Jude v. 8. 2 Pet. 2. 10. b 2 Tim. 3. 4. c 2 Tim. 3. 6, 7, 8. 2 Pet. 2. 1, 2, 3, 18, 19.

and

and State into *Schiſms* and *Factions*, making the People hard-hearted, and uncharitable, and diſobedient and ſtubborn.

Fifthly, they that write of weights and meaſures tell us, that Tin is the moſt light and *fluid* metal of all; and S. *Jude* obſerves of the pretenders to Godlineſs, that they are of an *aerie flitting* complexion, *waves of the ſea, foming out their own ſhame, wandring Starrs, Clouds without water, carried about with every wind of Doctrine*, v. 19. *ever learning*, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, *but never coming to the knowledge of the Truth*. 2 Tim. 3. 7. He can be *Phariſee, Saducee, Gaulonite, Herodian*, any thing. *The double minded man is unſtable in all his wayes*. S. *James* 1. 8. it is no matter what the religion be, if it will ſerve his advantage. And if he can make a *Trade* of Godlineſs, you ſhall be ſure to have enough of the *form*, though he denies the *power* of it.

Stannum eſt metallorum omnium leviſsimum, ſicut aurum graviſsimum, ex experientiis Nic. Tartaleæ in appendice ad lib. Jordani de Ponderoſitate & Franciſci Euxei Pariſienſis. Brerewood. de ponder. & pret. c. 23.

Stannum —— eſt facillimæ fuſionis & ſub malleo facilis extenſionis —— Copia humidi, & viſcoſi aeris & aquæ —— efficit effuſionem facilem & extenſionem. P. Jo. Fabr. Panchym Vol. 2. l. 4. ſect. 7. c. 27. vid. Mocenicum loc. citat.

For Sixthly, it is obſerved that Tin has this property, that it will cleave to any Metal; * Gold, Silver, Braſs, Iron, Lead, indeed it matters not what, if you dreſs with *Tallow*, or *Roſin*, or any other fat or † *unctious* body; and then it will be ſure to cleave ſo faſt there will be no ungluing it it again, till you bring it to the

* Vaſa non ſolum ex re domeſtica in ciſternas, caldaria, lebetes, deſpumatoria, ſed etiam arma è re bellica, ut manubria ſive capulos gladiorum & ſicarum, parmas, & thoraces, ſive ex ferro; aut chalybe, ſive ex ære, aut cupro conficta Stanno obducimus &c. Angel. Sal. Oper. Chymic. in ſept. Planet. Ter. Spagyr. recenſ. c. de ſtanno. p. 119.

‖ Jungi inter ſe plumbum nigrum ſine albo non poteſt, nec hoc ſine oleo, Plin. Nat. hiſt. l. 34. c. 16.

‖ fire

‖ Stannum eſt facillimæ fuſionis —nam abundantia humidi efficit effuſionem facilem, —cum autem crudum ſit, & non perfecte coctum, ideo non eſt fixum & permanens in igne, ſed perenni igne & forti evaporat, & in auras convertitur. J. P. Fabr. Panchym. loc. citat. vid. & Mocenic. loc. citat.

fire: ſuch is the pretender of religion, you ſhall be ſure to have him of the *thriving* ſide ſtill: no getting him from thence without *fire*. And if it once comes to that paſs, if he be but in any danger of that, he melts and drops away from the Party, whatſoever it be; as ſoon from the gold, or ſilver, as the Braſs, or Iron, or Lead, the good, as the bad cauſe. And therefore ſayes our [a] Saviour, *it is neceſſary that offences* (and perſecutions) *ſhould come*; and S. [b] *Paul*, that *hereſies and ſects and diviſions ſhould come, that they which are approved* (that are gold and ſilver indeed, and can endure the *Fire*, and the *Touch*) *may be made manifeſt among you*. The Hypocrite will be ſure to be a *weather-cock*, a *turn-coat*, and you may know him by that; and he will never be a *Martyr*, for Tin and he cannot endure the *Fire*. The leaſt danger makes him wagg; and therefore S. *Peter*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 17. compares him to *clouds, that are carryed with a Tempeſt*, and our Saviour to *corn* ſown upon *ſtony ground*, which though for a while it may in calm and thriving times ſprout up, and flouriſh, yet no ſooner does the ſcorching *ſummers heat* of perſecution beat upon it, but it inſtantly decayes and withers.

a Mat. 18. 7.
b 1 Cor. 11. 19
2 Pet. 2. 17.
Mat. 13. 5, 6, 20, 21.

Again it is obſerved that Tin, if it be mixed with Braſs and Copper or Silver, it makes *Bell-metal*, that is excellent for ſound and Noyſe; indeed onely uſefull for that: ſo if hypocriſie and pretence to religion meet with ſome ſubtill crafty diſpoſitions, and of fit and popular Tempers, they are excellent for *Pulpits* and *Declamations*: and with their *noiſe* will

will ſoon draw whole *Multitudes* together. Their fair ſpeeches and language chain a Nation to their Tongues, as it is ſtoried of the *Gallick Hercules*, and make them follow to what place they pleaſe. And therefore ſayes Saint *Paul*, *Now I beſeech you brethren, mark them which cauſe diviſions and offences contrary to the Doctrine, which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are ſuch, ſerve not our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but their own belly, and by* good words *and* fair ſpeeches, *deceive the hearts of the ſimple.* Rom. 16. v. 17, 18.

Laſtly, it is obſerved of Tin that it is of a * very poyſonous nature, infecting the Brains, and diſtorting the Limbs and Sinews of thoſe, that melt, and work in it, by a *deadly fume*, that ariſes from it: ſo it is alſo true of Hypocriſie, nothing ſo fatall to the *brain* and *underſtanding*, as that, corrupting the *ſpirit*, diſtorting the face with ſtrange ſeemingly ſanctified *ſpaſms* and *convulſions*. *When ye faſt*, ſayes our Saviour, *be not like the Hypocrites of a ſad and mortified countenance*: ἀφανίζουσι γὰρ, for they *rack* and *crucifie*, or *vaniſh* into a *vizard*, or a *Fucus*, they *corrupt* and *diſfigure their faces*, *that they may appear to men to faſt*, and be the onely religious, when the heart is infected with divers luſts and abominable impieties, which makes them *reſiſt the truth, and become men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the Faith.* But you ſhall know them by their *faces*, for they look not as other men. 2 Tim. 3. 5, 6. Mat. 6. 16. 2 Tim. 3. 8.

* Si dubites an ſit venenum in ſtanno, quære ab iis qui embryonem fundunt, ac purgant, aut ab iis qui calcinant ſtannum, magno cum ſuo malo dicent: Frigidus, O pueri, fugite hinc, latet anguis in herba. Angel. ſal. op. Chym. loc. citat.

And therefore since this is the true Nature of
Mat.23.27. Hypocrisie, since the *whited sepulchre hides nothing but rottenness and dead mens bones*, was it not a great *blessing* for *Jerusalem*, that God now brought them to the *Fining Pot*? For whatsoever the Fury and the sharpness of the Flame be, yet since by these God purifies them from the dross and Tin, and Nationall sinns be purged out by National Judgements, there is *mercy* even in this *Judgement*. And though whilest the rod is on our backs, the Caustick to our wounds, and the
Heb.12.11. Metall in the Flame, the *Chastising is not joyous but grievous, Nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby*, and now *being made free from sinne, and become servants to God, we have our fruit unto*
Rom.6.22. *holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

But especially since God turns his hand upon a Nation, and melts them by Judgements to *purge* out the *dross* and take away the Tin, we should do well to consider, whether we have *answered* Gods *Artifice* and *Labour* upon us, how we are bettered by our Judgements, least, if we prove *Reprobate silver*, he casts us out of his favour, and reserve us for desolation.

For let us not flatter our selves, beloved —— God hath lately turned his hand upon us, and he never brings Nationall Judgements on a Land, but for National sinns. We have had a long time much *dross* and *Tin* in all our *holy things*.

That you may not think me a *Satyrist*, behold God loudly proclaims your *sin* in your *Punishment*.

niſhment. Does not *Blaſting* and *Meldews* in our fields ſhew us, that God is angry with the *Rjot* of our *Tables?* Does not he by our late *Malignant Feavers* in all places ſhew us, that we are truly *Ecclesia Malignantium,* all every where *malignant?* And does he not ſend *unknown diſeaſes* to puniſh unknown ſins?

What diſmal noyſome *peſtilences* did God not long ſince ſend among us, to ſweep away a Multitude of noyſome groſs impieties? *They provoked him to anger with their Inventions,* ſayes *David, and ſo the Plague brake in upon them.* And what a multitude of new *Inventions* had we? in Apparel, in dyet, in building (alas this was nothing!) in our ſhops, in our Trades, in our Cities, in our Towns, in our Schools, in our Courts, in our Pulpits, and Churches, nay in our Parlors and Conventicles too; and all for our Pride, and our covetouſneſs and luſt? Pſal. 106. 29.

And this made way for the *Bloody Horſe, Warr. They choſe new Gods, then was warr in the Gates.* Judges 5. verſ. 7. And this was juſt our caſe: Much longing and ſtirre about *new Religions,* and *Ceremonies,* and then the *Warr brake* in upon us. Revel. 6. 4.

And now when deſtruction overtook us like an *armed man,* our ſinnes and debaucheries did multiply with our miſeries; execrable and curſed Oaths outroaring the mouth of the Cannon; Souldiers pouring out their blood and their wine at the ſame wound; Oppreſſion, rapine, Murder, Calumny, Perjury of all ſorts, but above all the moſt damnable Hypocriſie and Lying in the world.

Rev. 6. 8. And now triumphantly marches in the *Pale Horſe* Famine. We luſted for Warr, and we had all the Plagues and Miſeries of Want and Devaſtation that attend it. When Iſrael would not be contented with *Manna*, but they muſt have blood and *fleſh* too, then ſayes *David*, he *gave* Pſal. 106, 16. *them their deſire: but he ſent leanneſs into their ſouls.* And what a *Famine* of all things inſtantly came upon us? Unuſual blights on our Corn; and then the poor wanted work, as well as bread, decay of Trade in our Shops, and of Merchants on the Exchange, of our Ships on our Seas, and our ſtrengths by Land. Our Gentry waſted, our Nobility degraded; our Univerſities ruined; our Clergy vilified, and *ſilenced*; our Laws, and Law-givers and Parliaments trampled on; and our Kings dethroned, and a new *Turkiſh Grand-Signoirſhip* built and cemented with their blood. So that now the whole nation with the Prophet beEſay 24. 16. gan to cry out *My Leanneſs, my Leanneſs! Wo unto me! the treacherous dealers have dealt treacherouſly, yea the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherouſly!*

And now we were in the *Melting Pot* indeed! The fire fell upon all; the *droſs* and *Tin*, as well as the *Gold* and *Silver*. But all this while we were the worſe for the Founders Art. Our ſinnes increaſed, and ſo did Gods Judgements. A great deal of *Zeal* in the *Pretext*, but in the Iſſue *ſacriledge*, *Blood-ſhed*, *Devouring Widdows Houſes*, while *for a pretence we made long Prayers*. Much adoe about *Gifts*, and *ſetting Chriſt*

upon

upon his Throne, but that we might be his *Deputies*, and *take the houſes of God in poſſeſsion.*

And then what was the Iſſue? we that were not content with a *Religion*, the *pureſt* and beſt eſtabliſhed in the Chriſtian world, had inſtantly a thouſand ſeverall *Sects* let in upon us. Our *Tin* had made our *Silver* ſo *brittle*, that the more it was *beaten*, the more it *cracked* and *flawed*; and no ſooner was one Faction grown into Power, and began to ſet up for it ſelf, but inſtantly another like a Muſhrom in a night, ſprung up and pretended greater Purity, and as they had damned their Predeceſſors of *Antichriſtianiſme* and *Popery*; ſo did theſe by the *ſame Arts* ruine thoſe, that had ruined others. *Religions* every day *multiplyed*, as the *Factions* did, till at laſt we had ſo many, that many doubted we had none at all.

And as it was with our *Religion*, ſo it was with our *Government*. God ſuffered our beſt of Princes to be taken from us for our ſinnes: and becauſe we *ſurfeited* with that *Plenty* and *Peace*, that his own and *Anceſtors* wiſdome, under God had poured upon us, but we ſcorned his gracious eaſie reyne that he had laid upon our Necks, and like wild, *reſty* horſes, that have got the Bitt into their mouthes, kicked to throw off the rider, God then ſuffered us to be exerciſed and ridden by all ſorts of Maſters; *Ariſtocracy*, *Democracy*, *Oligarchy*, *Anarchy*, *Oplarchy*, *Tyranny*, (though masked under the gracious name of a *Protectorſhip*) the moſt abſolute of any.

By this God exercised and melted us so long, till he made us sensible of our own Follies; and we had nothing left to pray for, or hope or endeavour, but onely to recall that blessing, we had so unworthily squandred away.

Jer. 3.7,14. & c. 31, 18, 19. And now to prove whether we were purified indeed, God poured us out of the Melting Pot, and to see whether we truly *turned to him*, and not to *our selves*, by a *Miracle*, without our own *Counsell* or *Conduct*, or *Valour* or *Forces*, nay without a *Blow struck*, or almost so much as a *word* spoken, he restored to us our *old Religion*, and *Laws*, and *Church-discipline*, and *State-government*, *our Judges as at the first*, *and our Counsellours*, *as at the beginning*, our *Magistrates*, and *Ministers*, and *Bishops*, and *Nobles*, and *Princes*, but above all our *good King*, whom we prayed for, we *longed* for, as the onely healer of our *Breaches*.

And what does he now expect, but that we thankfully embrace his Mercies, and truly value those blessings? That this *Grace* of his, which Tit. 2,11,12. has *brought this Salvation*, *may teach us*, *that denying ungodlinesse and worldly lusts*, *we live godly and righteously and soberly in this present world*, *that so* we may be called by all Nations round about us, *a Nation of Righteousnesse*, *a faithfull Nation*? And I humbly beseech God, that it may prove so in the issue.

Hos. 7. 16. But I fear me that many, many of us at least, *are like a deceitfull Bowe*; that we have *returned* Hos. 7.14. indeed, *but not to the most high that we have not cryed unto*

ed unto God with our hearts, when we howled upon our Beds, and that we assembled for Corn and for wine, but not to the most High, as it is in *Hosea* 7. 14. 16. For else *what meaneth this bleating of the sheep, and the oxen that I hear?* To what purpose this murmuring and repining at the Kings *Grace* and Goodness, and unparalled *Act* of *Mercy*? Why are we so unwilling to forget, and forgive petty *private injuries*, done unto us by our *Brethren*, when God hath so wonderfully passed by the grosse impieties of the *whole Nation*, and so miraculously spared those, as well as our selves, whom we grudge to Pardon? what means this reviving of our *old fears* and *Jealousies*, and Popular Declamations in our *Pulpits* and *Presses* against the Kings *evil Counsellours*, and the *Persecution* of the *Godly Party* that's *approaching*? the *Antichristianisme* and *Popery* in our *Religion*, and *Discipline*, and *Liturgy*, first up, and approved by the most eminent * *Reformers*, and then sealed by the blood of the most learned of our *Martyrs*? Have we a mind to revive our old Miseries and blood by our old *Animosities* and *scandals*? such which *time* and *experience*, and the *faith* and *Patience* and *steadfastness* of our *Confessors* have *confuted* even to any ordinary understandings?

1 Sam. 15, 14.

* P. Martyr. Bucer, Cranmer, Ridley, Taylor.

But consider I beseech you, beloved; will it not be a sad thing, if God after all this mercy, should say to us as he did to his People in the Prophet *Zachary* c. 7. v. 5, 6, 7. *When ye fasted and mourned this many years, did ye fast unto me, even to me? And when ye did eat, and ye did drink, did you not*

Zach. 7. 5, 6, 7.

not eat for your ſelves and drink for your ſelves? Should ye not hear the words, which the Lord hath cryed by the Miniſtery of the former *Prophets, When Jeruſalem was* inhabited, *and in* proſperity, *and the Cities thereof round about her?*

O then, beloved, in time conſider, before it repent God of his Mercies. * *If ye will return, return*, return to purpoſe: to *him*, not to *our ſelves*. If there be any *Contention*, let it be to ſhew who is moſt *thankfull* to *God*, and *Loyall* to the *King*, who moſt Zealous againſt vice in our ſelves or in others; who moſt *endeavouring to keep the unity of the ſpirit in the bond of peace*, and *perfecting holineſs in the fear of the Lord*. As God has *turned his hand upon* us and *from* us, ſo let us *turn* our hands *to* him. Since we have been *melted* by his *Judgements*, let us by his *Grace*, and for his *mercy* purge out our *droſs* and *Tin*. Let not this wiſe Founder *loſe* his *pains* and his *Art*, but let us anſwer his expectation; you my brethren of the *Clergy*, eſpecially, that have been in the very *bottome* of the Fornace,

Let your *Patience*, and *Meekneſs*, and *readineſs* to *forgive*, your *holy lives and converſations*, and *Zeal* and *diligence* in your *callings* ſhew, that you did not ſuffer *as evil doers*. And though God put you into the *Crucible* and *Melting Pot*, yet it was not your *juſt crimes*, but your *ſteadfaſtneſs* and *Conſtancy* in your adherence to the *King* and the *Laws*, and the *Primitive doctrine* and *diſcipline* of the Church, threw you out of your places and callings. And if as you have *ſuffered* as

Confeſ-

* Eſay 21.12.

Eph. 4.3.
2 Cor. 7.1.

1 Per. 3.15.

Confeſſors, ſo you ſhall *live* as *Confeſſors* too, it ſhall appear to your very adverſaries, that you have been in the *Melting Pot* to your *advantage*, and you ſhall *recover* your *Reputations* as well as *Legal Poſſeſsions*.

But if any of you *juſtly* have ſuffered as *evil doers*, though not according to a *due courſe* of Law, let it appear by your *future amendment*, that you have been *bettered* by your *ſufferings*, and though the flames have been *ſharp*, yet they have *purely purged* out all your *droſs*, and your *Tin*.

Then ſhall *God* and *Men* be *delighted* in you, and *Righteouſneſs* and *Peace* break in upon us like an *overflowing mighty* ſtream. Then ſhall your offerings and ſervices be acceptable to God, and *Moſes* hands lift up in *prayer* ſhall ſtrengthen the hands of our *Joſuah's* and *Rulers*, and *Magiſtrates*, while they lift up the *ſword* of *Juſtice* againſt the *Amalekites*. When *Phineas* the *Prieſt prayed*, as ſome render it, and *Phineas* the *Magiſtrate executed Judgement*, as others, *then the Plague was ſtayed*. Exod 17.11. 12.13. Pſal.106. 30. וַיִּפְלָל׃ Oravit. Paraph Caldaic. Verſ. Syriac. Dijudicavit. Pagnin. Junius.

But, my Lords and Gentlemen, the Juſtices of the Peace, I need not mind you of your duties, if the Time would give leave. As you have eminently ſuffered by the ſinns of the Nation, ſo I hope your ſenſe of your miſeries, which thoſe ſins have brought upon you, will make you friends to *Juſtice* and the *Laws*, without any other *Monitor*. And if as *Gods Name* is *called* upon you, ſo you Pſal. 82.6.

shall *Judge for God* too, and carry your selves as in his sight, who still *standeth in the Congregation of the Gods*, to mark and *judge them*, then shall it appear, that you are *the Ministers of God to us for good*, and that you *bear not the sword in vain*. *Then shall the People speak of your wisdome, and the congregation shall shew forth your praise*; then shall you make them sensible of the *evil* of our *former* Governours, and bless God, that has *restored us our Judges as at the first and our Counsellors as at the beginning*. And you shall be the happy Instruments of repairing our Breaches, and building, and establishing our *Jerusalem* in Righteousness and Peace, and we shall again be called *a City of Righteousness, a faithfull City*. Which God of his infinite mercy grant for Jesus sake Amen.

THE END.